

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT

COOK INLET AREA STATE-WATERS PACIFIC COD SEASON CLOSES

AND PARALLEL PACIFIC COD SEASON OPENS DECEMBER 27

EMERGENCY ORDER # 2-GF-H-10-11

The Cook Inlet Area state-waters Pacific cod season will close at 12:00 noon December 27 and a parallel Pacific cod season will open at 12:00 noon December 27, 2011. Unless otherwise addressed in state regulation, the season dates and gear restrictions will coincide with those established by NMFS for the federal Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA). Fishermen participating in the state-waters Pacific cod fishery must deliver their harvest prior to participating in the parallel season. Fishermen participating in the parallel season must: 1) possess a Cook Inlet Nonexclusive Area Registration from ADF&G; 2) use a NMFS-approved vessel monitoring system (VMS) as described at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ole/ak_faqs.html and required aboard vessels fishing pot or longline gear in parallel Pacific cod fisheries and; 3) employ the seabird avoidance measures required for longline gear in certain areas under regulation 5 AAC 28.055 and described at: <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/protectedresources/seabirds/guide.htm>.

Waters adjacent to two rookeries within the Cook Inlet Area, Sugarloaf Island and Outer Pye Island, remain closed to fishing for Pacific cod with pot or longline gear to protect endangered Steller sea lions. Vessel transit is closed within 3 nautical miles (nmi) of these locations and fishing within 10 nmi of these locations is closed.

Regulation 5AAC 28.350 (b), closes certain waters to groundfish pot gear along the west side of Cook Inlet and within Kachemak Bay. Regulation 5 AAC 28.365 requires full retention of all rockfish caught, sets a rockfish bycatch allowance of 10% during directed Pacific cod fisheries, and requires any rockfish bycatch overage to be reported as such on the fish ticket. No rockfish landing or combination of landings may exceed the 5-day trip limits of 4,000 pounds from the North Gulf District and 1,000 pounds from the Cook Inlet District.

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